

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE BILL ANALYSIS

AMENDMENT DATE: Original
POSITION: Oppose
SPONSOR: Author

BILL NUMBER: SB 288
AUTHOR: L. Yee

BILL SUMMARY

This bill would require that phonetic translations of English names of candidates be provided, with exceptions as specified, whenever the ballot materials are required to be translated.

FISCAL SUMMARY

According to the Secretary of State (SOS), this bill would likely have no fiscal impact since the SOS already provides transliterations (the phonetic translation in a character-based language) for the Chinese language in the Voter Information Guide (VIG). The SOS has not yet determined if this bill would apply to any other languages where translations are done in the VIG. Finance notes that this bill would likely create a reimbursable mandate of unknown cost by requiring local elections officials to provide phonetic translations of English names of candidates whenever ballot materials are required to be translated. Elections officials would also be required to verify exceptions, as specified.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local entities for increased costs associated with any new program or higher level of service imposed by the state on local entities if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the new program or higher level of service is reimbursable and a state mandate.

COMMENTS

The Department of Finance opposes this bill based on potential mandated costs associated with increased translation requirements.

Existing law requires the translation of ballots and ballot materials into languages other than English when specified. Existing law also provides that if a candidate changes his or her name within one year of any election, the new name shall not appear upon the ballot unless the change was made by either marriage or a court decree.

This bill would require that phonetic translations of the English names of candidates be provided, with exceptions as specified, whenever the ballot materials (including sample ballots and ballots) are required to be translated.

While some cities, such as San Francisco, already implemented similar requirements in a local ordinance, this bill would still likely be reimbursable unless a local entity specifically requests the state regulations to be included in the ordinance.

Analyst/Principal (0222) R. Baker	Date	Program Budget Manager Todd Jerue	Date
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Department Deputy Director	Date
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Governor's Office:	By:	Date:	Position Approved _____
			Position Disapproved _____

BILL ANALYSIS	Form DF-43 (Rev 03/95 Buff)
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BILL ANALYSIS/ENROLLED BILL REPORT--(CONTINUED)**Form DF-43****AUTHOR****AMENDMENT DATE****BILL NUMBER**

L. Yee

Original

SB 288

Code/Department Agency or Revenue Type	SO	(Fiscal Impact by Fiscal Year)							
	LA	(Dollars in Thousands)							
	CO	PROP							Fund
	RV	98	FC	2008-2009	FC	2009-2010	FC	2010-2011	Code
0890/Secty State	SO	No	-----	See Fiscal Summary				-----	0001